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REMARKS

The allowance of claims 7-17 is appreciated.

Claims 1-17 remain in the application.

Claim 1 is amended to more particularly point out and distinguish claim the invention. The amendment to claim 1 is supported by FIG. 1 and FIG. 2 in addition to at least page 6, lines 15-21. Page 6, lines 15-21 indicates that generally device 10 is hollow and inflated or filled with soft materials to support cover 14. Thus, having a slit in the outer cover would allow air or other soft materials to escape resulting in deflating device 10.

New claim 18 is added. Support for new claim 18 is provided at least in the sections cited for the support of the amendment of claim 1.

Objection to claim 4:

Claim 4 was objected to for an improper spelling. It is believed that the amendment to claim 4 now overcomes this objection.

35 USC 102 Rejection:

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 over U.S. patent no. 5,961,426 issued to Spector. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Amended claim 1 includes, among other things, a resilient outer cover integral to the bop-bag and devoid of an inflation stem projecting through a slit in the top area of the resilient outer cover.

Spector discloses in column 4, lines 1-8, that a balloon is inserted inside of the fabric cover and that an inflation stem of the balloon projects through a slit in the

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fabric. Thus, Spector discloses exactly the opposite of what is called for in amended claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the relied on reference does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 2 through 6 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

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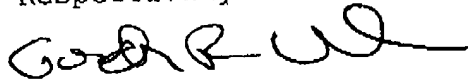
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CONCLUSION

Applicant made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. In view of all of the above, it is believed that the claims are allowable, and that the case is now in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

One dependent claim was added for a total of three independent claims and 18 total claims, thus, it is believed that no fees are due for this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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Applicant